

Abstracts

Development of an Instrument for Prescribing Compensatory Education for Vocational Trainees. Vocational Education Project. Final Report.

Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.; Washington State Board for Vocational Education, Olympia. Research Coordinating Unit. 147 pp.; MF \$.76; HC \$6.97; June 1975.

This document reports the development of three pre-entry criterion-referenced tests (Skill Checks) designed to assess an applicant's verbal and numerical competencies and to assist in the implementation of remedial education where needed, in the vocational training areas of office occupations, automotive mechanics, and machine shop. A general matrix of competencies for the three training areas was established through analysis of course content in terms of reading level of material used, numerical skills needed, and student and instructor perceptions of skills necessary to complete a course successfully. These were developed into Skill Checks which underwent field testing, item analysis, measurement of validity, and evaluation in order to determine their usefulness as predictors of student success and need for remediation. A flow chart visually outlines test development procedure. Continuation of the project is planned with six new areas for test development and the cooperation of other institutions anticipated. It is felt that immediate identification of skill deficiencies and their remediation, through Skill Checks, will help students to complete their vocational programs successfully. A bibliography, a third party evaluation of the project, and the office occupations, automotive mechanics, and machine shop tests are appended.

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Managing the Context of Work

Human Resources Research Organization, Alexandria, Va. Social and Rehabilitation Service (DHEW), Washington, D.C.; 16 pp.; MF \$.76; HC \$1.58; February 1975.

People function within situational contexts and these contexts define and limit behavior. An organization is a very important context and, accordingly, produces potent forces which circumscribe and channel the activities, attitudes and motivations of personnel. For this reason, both individual and group behavior within an organization is simply not the same as that outside of it. Carried over to management, this suggests that the first thing of which a manager must become aware is that behavior in organizations is usually the result of numerous determinants, many of which will have their source in the work context. To neglect context factors can only cause a manager to misunderstand the problem and take the wrong course for its resolution. Fortunately, the work context is one thing that can be greatly influenced and controlled by managers. The major point of this discussion is that many problems that lead to serious interference with organizational effectiveness have their sources in the failures of organizational leaders to provide work-context conditions that are most conducive to effective performance. Three general factors that control performance in every organization are: effective management, effective leadership and effective training.

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